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Generated on Dec 12 2025, 7:00 AM

Below is a fantastic recipe for a classic cherry pie that's sweet, tart, and bursting with flavor. This one uses fresh or frozen cherries for the best results, and I'll include tips for a flaky homemade crust. It serves about 8 people and takes roughly 1 hour to prep plus 1 hour to bake (plus cooling time). It's perfect for summer picnics or holidays!

Ingredients

For the Pie Crust (makes a double crust for a 9-inch pie):

1. 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
2. 1 teaspoon salt
3. 1 teaspoon sugar
4. 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, chilled and cut into small cubes
5. ¼ to ½ cup ice water

For the Cherry Filling:

6. 5 cups pitted fresh cherries (or frozen, thawed and drained; about 2 lbs)
7. ¾ cup granulated sugar (adjust to taste if your cherries are very sweet or tart)
8. ¼ cup cornstarch

9. 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
10. 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
11. ½ teaspoon almond extract (optional, but it enhances the cherry flavor)
12. ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)
13. 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
14. 1 egg (for egg wash)
15. 1 tablespoon milk or water (for egg wash)
16. Coarse sugar (like turbinado) for sprinkling on top

Instructions

17. **Prepare the Pie Crust:**

18. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, and sugar.
19. Add the chilled butter cubes and use a pastry cutter (or your fingers) to work it in until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs with pea-sized butter pieces.
20. Gradually add ice water, 1 tablespoon at a time, mixing until the dough just comes together (it should hold when pinched but not be sticky). Divide into two discs, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour (or up to 2 days).
21. Tip: For extra flakiness, keep everything cold—chill your bowl and tools if needed!

22. **Make the Filling:**

23. In a large bowl, combine the pitted cherries, sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice, vanilla extract, almond extract (if using), and cinnamon (if using). Toss gently to coat. Let it sit for 15-20 minutes to release some juices (this is called macerating and helps thicken the filling).
24. If using frozen cherries, make sure they're fully thawed and drain excess liquid to avoid a soggy pie.
25. **Assemble the Pie:**
26. Preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C) and place a baking sheet on the lower rack to catch any drips.
27. On a lightly floured surface, roll out one dough disc into a 12-inch circle (about 1/8-inch thick). Transfer it to a 9-inch pie dish, gently pressing it into the bottom and sides. Trim any excess overhang to about 1/2 inch.
28. Pour the cherry filling into the crust and dot the top with the small pieces of butter.
29. Roll out the second dough disc into another 12-inch circle. For a lattice top (fancy and vented): Cut into 1-inch strips and weave them over the filling. For a solid top: Place it over the filling, crimp the edges to seal, and cut a few slits for steam to escape.
30. Whisk the egg with milk or water for an egg wash, brush it over the top crust, and sprinkle with coarse sugar.
31. **Bake the Pie:**
32. Place the pie on the preheated baking sheet and bake at 425°F for 15 minutes to set the crust.
33. Reduce the temperature to 375°F (190°C) and bake for another 40-50 minutes, until the crust is golden brown and the filling is bubbling vigorously through the vents.
34. If the edges brown too quickly, cover them with foil halfway through.

35. Let the pie cool completely on a wire rack (at least 2-3 hours) before slicing—this allows the filling to set.

Tips for a Great Cherry Pie

36. **Cherry Selection:** Fresh sour cherries (like Montmorency) make the best pie for that perfect tartness. If using sweet cherries, reduce the sugar slightly.
37. **Thickening:** If your filling seems too runny after macerating, add an extra tablespoon of cornstarch.
38. **Make-Ahead:** You can assemble the pie and freeze it unbaked for up to 3 months. Bake from frozen, adding 10-15 extra minutes.
39. **Variations:** Add a handful of fresh berries or a splash of bourbon to the filling for a twist.
40. **Serving:** Top with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream for ultimate indulgence.

This recipe is tried-and-true—flaky crust, juicy filling, and not too sweet. If you have dietary tweaks (e.g., gluten-free or vegan), let me know, and I can adjust! Enjoy baking! ?

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